

# **NATIVE PLANT GARDENING GUIDEBOOK**

**A CATALOG OF CALIFORNIA NATIVE  
PLANTS, THEIR BENEFITS, AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL  
INCORPORATION INTO LANDSCAPES,  
PROVIDED BY THE IERCD**



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## ABOUT OUR NURSERY

IERCD's Nursery was first created in 2018, and was constructed adjacent to Glen Avon Park in Jurupa Valley. It was initially designed to increase stock for IERCD's habitat uplift projects, but soon became a hub of activity where volunteers and partners transformed locally collected seeds into plants ready for use in a variety of landscapes and public education settings. Since then, the nursery has expanded to include a second location at 5370 Riverview Drive in Jurupa Valley, as part of the multi-partner-managed **Louis Robidoux Parkland and Pecan Grove**. In addition to community volunteers, IERCD partners including Huerta del Valle, Rivers and Lands Conservancy, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, and Southern California Mountains Foundation support and contribute to both sites.

More information about IERCD's nursery can be found at:

[iercd.org/native-plant-nursery](https://iercd.org/native-plant-nursery)



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Annual</b>	A plant that completes its lifecycle in one year (or growing season) or less.
<b>Deadhead</b>	The process of snipping off spent flowers to encourage new growth.
<b>Drought-Resistant</b>	Plants that are adapted to long, dry summers and short, rainy winters. They can tolerate low-water conditions without undergoing excessive stress.
<b>Endemic</b>	An organism that is native and restricted to a specific environment
<b>Perennial</b>	A plant that completes its lifecycle in more than two years or growing seasons.
<b>Pollinator</b>	Anything that helps carry pollen from the male part of the flower (stamen) to the female part of the same or another flower (stigma). E.g. bees, wasps, moths, butterflies, birds, flies and small mammals, including bats.
<b>Propagate</b>	The process of creating new plants, either by seeds or cuttings.
<b>Rhizomatous</b>	A plant that grows rhizomes (a creeping rootstalk that grows horizontally underground or across the soil surface). Rhizomes store carbohydrates and proteins so the rhizomatous plant can survive between growing seasons.
<b>Root ball</b>	The mass formed by the roots of a plant and the soil surrounding them.
<b>Rootbound</b>	When a plant has roots formed into a dense, tangled mass that allows little or no space for further growth.



# **BENEFITS OF NATIVE PLANTS**

This guide was created with the intention of sharing the wonders of California native plants. We hope that it serves as a resource for those interested in gardening, conservation, increasing biodiversity in their area, or simply enjoying the beauty of native blooms. There are a few key advantages to growing native plants in your home:

## **Water Conservation**

Water conservation is a critical concern in California. Incorporating drought tolerant and native species into your home can help reduce your water usage and contribute to statewide water conservation efforts.

## **Biodiversity Preservation:**

Native plants form the foundation of the food web and support local ecosystems. They provide habitat and resources for wildlife such as birds, butterflies, and bees. By planting native plants, you help preserve the biodiversity of the region.

## **Low Maintenance**

Nonnative plants, which are not adapted to California's climate, require more maintenance than native plants. Native plants will thrive while requiring less time, water, fertilizer, and care.

## **Soil Health**

The extensive root systems of native plants improve soil health by increasing the ground's ability to retain water and nutrients. The deep roots of many California native plants also aid in preventing soil erosion, especially in hilly or sloping landscapes.





## PLANTING TUTORIAL

The best time to plant native plants is in the winter and fall, but regular watering is the key to successful spring and summer planting! Before they can develop into beautiful, drought-tolerant vegetation, your plants need plenty of hydration to establish themselves in their new home.

- **Soak your plants** in water the night before. This helps the root ball (the roots and soil inside the pot) become hydrophilic, meaning they will absorb water from the surrounding soil once they're put in the ground.
- **Choose your planting spot.** Use this guide to determine how much space and sunlight your plant will need.
- **Clear the area.** Remove any weeds or debris.
- **Dig your hole.** Make sure it's twice as wide and nearly as deep as your plant's pot.
- **Water the hole.** Fill the hole with water and let it drain. Again, this will help water easily travel through the surrounding soil and into your root ball.
- **Backfill the hole with a small amount of soil.** The roots will be able to travel more easily through this softer soil. Add enough in so that when you place the plant into the hole, it is about 1/4-1/2" above the surrounding soil.
- **Gently remove your plant from the pot.** Try to disturb the roots as little as possible. It is okay to delicately separate the roots if they are densely rootbound.
- **Set the plant into the hole.** If the plant is growing crooked, you can use this opportunity to set it upright.
  - Remember: your plant should be about 1/4-1/2" above the surrounding soil. If you need to adjust the depth of your hole, now is your last chance.
- **Backfill the hole.** Pack the soil gently but firmly.
- **Create a basin** around the plant using any excess soil. It should have about a 6" radius. This will help your plant retain moisture, especially if it's planted on a slope.
- **Mulch** around your plant, creating a 2"-3" layer. Try not to place mulch against the stems of your plant to avoid rot.
- **Water** your plant.



# BLACK SAGE

**Scientific Name:** *Salvia mellifera*

**Bloom Period:** Spring

**Uses:** Bank Stabilization, Groundcovers, Hedges, Bird Gardens, Pollinator Gardens



full sun



shrub



3-6 ft tall

3-10 ft wide



white to pale blue or lavender



very low

This highly aromatic shrub thrives in full sun and requires little care. A deep watering once a week is all it requires until it is well established (about a year). Plants can be pruned in late winter or early spring to keep them compact but encourage bushier growth. Keep an eye out for curling leaves, which indicate a stressed sage.





# BRITTLEBUSH

**Scientific Name:** *Encelia farinosa*

**Bloom Period:** Spring

**Uses:** Bank Stabilization, Bee Gardens



full sun



shrub



1-5 ft tall

4 ft wide



yellow



very low

This tough yet beautiful shrub can give your garden lovely pops of gold. Brittlebush grows rapidly when moisture is available. This plant sprouts more flowers if you deadhead it. Without irrigation, this plant will go dormant during the summer.





# CALIFORNIA BUCKWHEAT

**Scientific Name:** *Eriogonum fasciculatum*

**Bloom Period:** Spring- Fall

**Uses:** Bank Stabilization, Bird Gardens, Groundcovers, Pollinator Gardens



full sun



shrub



1-6.6 ft tall

3 ft wide



yellow, cream, pink, white



very low

A native garden would not be complete without California buckwheat. Pink to white and cream-colored flowers are produced as early as March, and as the soil dries, they turn a pretty red-rust color. These dried seedheads will provide valuable food for birds and eventually serve as natural mulch, so be sure to leave them be!







# CALIFORNIA FUCHSIA

**Scientific Name:** *Epilobium canum*

**Bloom Period:** Summer - Fall

**Uses:** Groundcovers, Pollinator Gardens



full sun to partial shade



groundcover, shrub



0.25-1.5 ft tall

2-3 ft wide



red



low-moderate

Fuchsias can be planted in full sun or partial shade, but are more likely to produce flowers in a sunny location. It is normal for this plant to go dormant during the winter, so do not be alarmed when you notice dieback during the cold season. Even after it is established, your fuchsia may need watering monthly during the summer. This is a rhizomatous plant. Its red, tube-shaped flowers are especially attractive to hummingbirds.





# CALIFORNIA SAGEBRUSH

**Scientific Name:** *Artemisia californica*

**Bloom Period:** Spring - Fall

**Uses:** Bank Stabilization, Groundcovers, Butterfly Gardens, Bird Gardens



full sun to partial shade



shrub



1-8 ft tall

4 ft wide



cream, white, yellow



very low

This plant can be summer deciduous, meaning it will go dormant in drought or without irrigation. Once established it can be very drought tolerant.





# CANE CHOLLA

**Scientific Name:** *Cylindropuntia bernardina*

**Bloom Period:** Spring-Summer

**Uses:** Hedges, Bird Gardens



full sun



succulent



5-10 ft tall

5-10 ft wide



yellow, orange, green



very low

The long spines of this cactus are each accompanied by barbs at the ends, which make them painful to remove if pricked! While its showy flowers and interesting shape make it worth planting in the garden, be cautious about placement and consider planting away from highly trafficked areas.





# CHAPARRAL NIGHTSHADE

**Scientific Name:** *Solanum xanti*

**Bloom Period:** Winter- Summer

**Uses:** Bird Gardens



full sun to partial shade



shrub



2-4 ft tall

2-4 ft wide



purple



very low

Chaparral nightshade (also known as purple nightshade) is a vining plant. Do not consume any part of the plant. It is toxic to humans and many animals. If off irrigation during the summer, *Solanum xanti* will die back to the root.







# CHAPARRAL YUCCA

**Scientific Name:** *Hesperoyucca whipplei*

**Bloom Period:** Flowers once before plant death

**Uses:** Groundcovers, Bird Gardens



full sun



succulent



2-12 ft tall

2-3 ft wide



cream to yellow



very low

This plant takes 5-10 years to reach maturity. It will bloom once, and then die. The stalk can remain upright for several years following its death. Chaparral yucca is pollinated by the California yucca moth (*Tegeticula maculata*) and the dead stalk provides habitat for their immature larvae.





# COAST LIVE OAK

**Scientific Name:** *Quercus agrifolia*

**Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer

**Uses:** Bank Stabilization, Hedges, Bird Gardens, Butterfly Gardens



full sun to partial shade



tree



25-82 ft tall

15-35 ft wide



yellow, cream, green



low

It is not uncommon for coast live oaks to live over 250 years! For optimum growth, water your tree once a week for the first year, then once a month until it reaches a height of around 10 feet. It is possible for oaks to be damaged by pests such as goldspotted oak borer (GSOB). GSOB often lies undetected in firewood, only to escape after unsuspecting travelers take their wood to campsites, bonfires, and other outdoor events. The best way to avoid GSOB is to not transport firewood across long distances, or “buy it where you burn it.”





# COMMON YARROW

**Scientific Name:** *Achillea millefolium*

**Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer

**Uses:** Bank Stabilization, Groundcovers, Pollinator Gardens



full sun to full shade



herbaceous annual



1-3 ft tall

5-1.5 ft wide



white, yellow



moderate

This plant spreads by rhizomes and can quickly grow throughout your garden. Divide yarrow plants every 2-3 years in the spring to avoid overcrowding. Gently unearth the plant after loosening the soil with a shovel. Take your shovel and divide the plant in half (or more!). Each segment should have at least three shoots to be viable. Plant these segments in new sunny spots and watch them grow!





# LANCELEAVED DUDLEYA

**Scientific Name:** *Dudleya lanceolata*

**Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer

**Uses:** Bird Gardens, Pollinator Gardens



full sun



succulent



4.2 - 8.4 inches tall

1 ft wide



orange, pink, red, yellow



very low

This succulent plant is extremely variable. It can have green to purple leaves and red, orange, or yellow flowers, which are attractive to hummingbirds. The fleshy leaves only grow 3-4 inches above the ground, but the flower stalks can grow quite tall in comparison. The offshoots that grow from the original plant can be removed and placed elsewhere in your garden. Keep in mind that it can die back to the root during the drier parts of summer. It springs back with water and rain.







# NARROWLEAF MILKWEED

**Scientific Name:** *Asclepias fascicularis*

**Bloom Period:** Summer, Fall

**Uses:** Bird Gardens, Pollinator Gardens



full sun



shrub



1.7-3.3 ft tall

1 ft wide



white, lavender



low-moderate

Milkweeds are the larval host plants of monarch butterflies. California's monarch population is extremely dependent on this species, narrowleaf milkweed, in particular. It is important to remember that this plant will die back in the winter, sometimes all the way back to the ground. The plant will resprout in the spring. Narrowleaf milkweed is prone to being attacked by aphids, but a simple solution of a small amount of dish soap diluted in water can keep them at bay. This is a weakly rhizomatous plant.





# SHOWY PENSTEMON

**Scientific Name:** *Penstemon spectabilis*

**Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer

**Uses:** Bird Gardens, Pollinator Gardens



full sun



shrub



2-4 ft tall

3-4 ft wide



bluish purple, pink



low

Showy penstemon grows very quickly and can begin attracting hummingbirds to your garden within the first year. If irrigated this plant will stay green, but can also go dormant and die back entirely to the a living root in response to summer heat or drought.





# SILVER LUPINE

**Scientific Name:** *Lupinus albifrons*

**Bloom Period:** Spring

**Uses:** Bird Gardens, Pollinator Gardens



full sun



shrub



3.2 - 5 ft tall

2-3 ft wide



bluish purple, pink



very low

Unlike most lupines, silver lupine (also known as silver bush lupine) has woody stems. Lupines are in the pea family (Fabaceae) making them an important host species for a number of butterfly and moth species including the lupine blue butterfly.





# SOUTHERN BUSH MONKEYFLOWER

**Scientific Name:** *Diplacus longiflorus*

**Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer

**Uses:** Bird Gardens, Pollinator Gardens



partial shade



shrub



0.33-3 ft tall



yellow to orange



low

The color of *Diplacus longiflorus* flowers vary. A hot day can cause its leaves to curl and become sticky, which is why it's sometimes referred to as "sticky" monkey flower. This plant will go dormant if placed in full sun. Keep it in partial shade for beautiful flowers! Regular pruning of flowerheads will encourage bushier growth and healthier branches.







# SOUTHERN CA BLACK WALNUT

**Scientific Name:** *Juglans californica*

**Bloom Period:** Summer

**Uses:** Bank Stabilization, Bird Gardens



full sun to partial shade



tree



50-75 ft tall

50-75 ft wide



yellow



moderate-high

*Juglans californica* is endemic to California. Birds like to eat the nuts and nest in the branches, making it a great wildlife attractor. Avoid planting other species too close to this one. The toxin developed by its seeds prevents understory plant growth.





# VELVETY GOLDENROD

**Scientific Name:** *Solidago velutina*

**Bloom Period:** Summer - Fall

**Uses:** Groundcovers, Bee Gardens



Full Sun to Partial Shade



Herbaceous perennial



0.7-3 ft tall



yellow



Low

Divide goldenrod plants every 2-3 years in the spring to avoid overcrowding. Gently unearth the plant after loosening the soil with a shovel. Take your shovel and divide the plant in half (or more!). Each segment should have at least three shoots to be viable. Plant these segments in new sunny spots. This plant is winter deciduous.





# WESTERN COLUMBINE

**Scientific Name:** *Aquilegia formosa*

**Bloom Period:** Spring

**Uses:** Bird Gardens



full sun to full shade



herbaceous perennial



1.5-3 ft tall

1 ft wide



red, yellow



moderate-high

This plant is capable of self-seeding! Seedlings may appear around the plant in the summer and can be transplanted around the garden the following year. In the wild, this plant is closely associated with perennial streams, so be sure to plant it somewhere that it will receive plenty of water.





# WESTERN SYCAMORE

**Scientific Name:** *Platanus racemosa*

**Bloom Period:** Spring, Winter

**Uses:** Bird Gardens, Butterfly Gardens



full sun to partial shade



tree



20-115 ft tall

50 ft wide

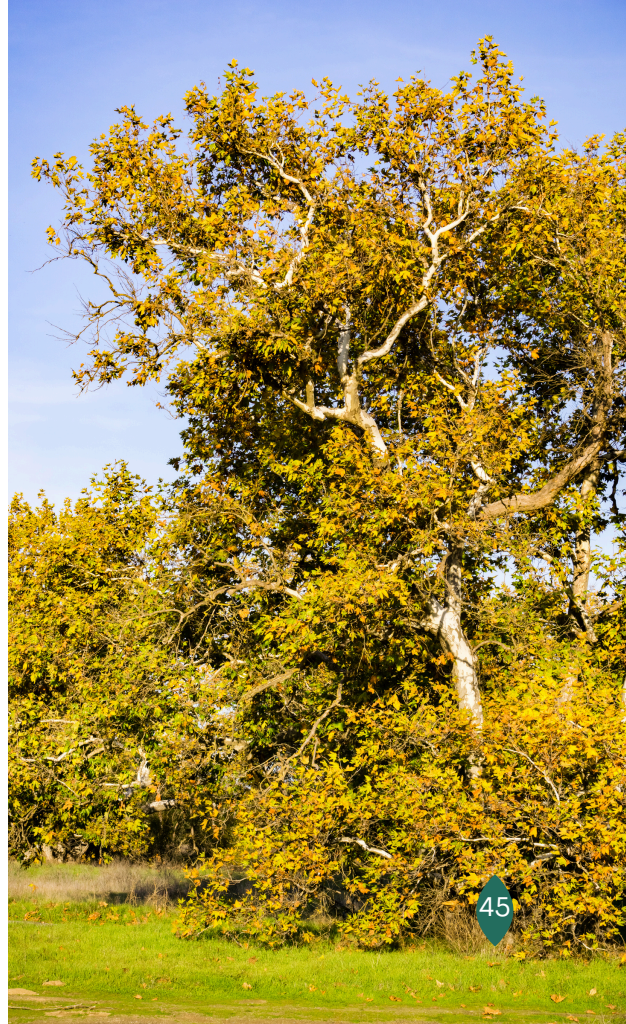


yellow, cream, orange



moderate-high

This tree will need a deep, regular soaking to get established. If watered regularly, the roots will grow downward. If not, they will grow outward and spread. Once it begins growing, the trunk will typically divide into two offshoots.







# WHITE SAGE

**Scientific Name:** *Salvia apiana*

**Bloom Period:** Winter-Summer

**Uses:** Bank Stabilization, Groundcovers, Hedges, Bird Gardens, Pollinator Gardens



full sun



shrub



3-5 ft tall

3-8 ft wide



white



very low

This fragrant plant will attract bees, butterflies, birds, and other wildlife to your garden. In the late summer you may want to prune back the flower stalks. This plant will go dormant in the summer without irrigation



## LOCAL NURSERIES AND RESOURCES

- **NATIVE PLANT NURSERIES:**

- Las Pilitas Nursery ([laspilitas.com](http://laspilitas.com))
- California Botanic Garden ([calbg.org](http://calbg.org))

- **RESOURCES:**

- Calscape ([Calscape.org](http://Calscape.org))
- UCCE Master Gardeners:
  - San Bernardino County ([mgsb.ucanr.edu/](http://mgsb.ucanr.edu/))
  - Riverside County ([ucanr.edu/sites/RiversideMG/](http://ucanr.edu/sites/RiversideMG/))
- California Native Plant Society ([cnps.org](http://cnps.org))



**QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS GUIDE?**

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